



The Patriot Reader Newsletter

P.O. Box 2117

St. Augustine, FL 32085

Bill Dudley, Publisher

Michael Rothfeld, Editor

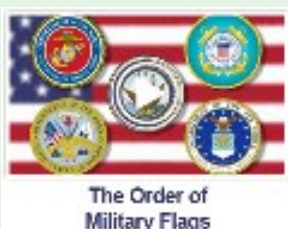
Volume 12, Issue 11

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley

November 2023

Inside this Edition

- Upcoming VC Speakers
- Veterans Day SJC 11/11 11am
- Wreaths Across America Dec. 16, 2023
- FL Veterans Hall of Fame
- Flying with the Blue Angels
- World Changers Concert
- Lighthouse: Military Honor Plaza
- VC SJC September Minutes
- From Sheriff Hardwick
- COL Roy H Hinman II ret, MD
- From the DAR
- Hope 4 Vets
- MACV-SOG
- Military Nurses
- The CJ3 Foundation
- Combat Paper Workshop
- Fallen Patriots Foundation
- VC SJC Golf Tournament
- VA Benefits & Health Care
- Update SJC Homeless Veterans
- A Guardian gets Ranger Tab
- Camp Lejeune Water Victims
- Stories of Service
- Vets 4 Vets meets 1/6/24
- Military Veterans Expo



Fellow Veterans,
Your Veterans Council Chairman was honored this week to again perform the duties of participating on Senator Marco Rubio's Military Academy Selection Board. This is my 15th year of participating on this very important Board to help select a number of deserving students who have applied for admission to one of the prestigious military academies. I was honored to participate as one of three panelists to recommend to Senator Rubio 10 finalists out of 25 applicants that applied this year for the United States Air Force Military Academy. It was an extremely difficult decision to select the finalists as all applicants were the best of the best from the students that applied. Our future military leadership will be in very capable hands with this quality of young men and women

entering our military academies.
Our Wreaths Across America program is now in full swing with sells at a brisk pace. However, we are slightly behind in our goal of \$21,080. We need to step up the pace to achieve this year's goal so if you haven't yet placed your order for a wreath, now is the time to do so. Remember. If you purchase 2 wreaths for \$34, the Veterans Council receives 3 wreaths which will be placed on a gravesite on Dec. 16.
Our planning for this year's Veterans Day Program is nearing completion. We have an excellent program lined up for this year as we honor all veterans who have served in the Global War on Terrorism, our country's longest military engagement.
There are several other very important and exciting upcoming events that you need to mark on your calendars that are advertised



in this edition of your Patriot Reader newsletter. Please plan to attend as many of these events as possible as each of them are for your enjoyment and help honor our veterans. And lastly, I invite each of you to join us this Thursday, Oct. 26 at 7 PM at the Health and Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View for this month's Veterans Council meeting. We always have excellent speakers and it gives you an insight as to what is going on in your veteran community and how you may help. Thank you for your service.
Bill Dudley
Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc.



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County meets on the last Thursday of the month, all are invited to attend.

We meet at the County Health & Human Services Building, 200 San Sebastian View, at 7 pm in the Muscovy room.

Upcoming Speakers

October 26

**Karen Moore, St Augustine Lighthouse
Lynn Geiser, Peer to Peer Therapeutic Art Program
for Military Women and
Carl Cricco, CEO K9s For Warriors**

November 30

**Don Kabrich, a local veteran climbs Mt Everest in 2023
and Jennifer Jenkins, Wounded Warrior Project**

December 28

Joseph Pearce, Wish for Our Heroes

January 25, 2024

**Dennis Graves, CJ3 Foundation
William Zorich, Irreverent Warriors**

Veterans Day Ceremony November 11

Please join us as we Honor our Veterans

Veterans Day in St. Augustine, Saturday November 11, at Anastasia Baptist Church, 1650 A1A S, as we all celebrate and honor our veterans.



Hosted by the Veterans Council of St. Johns County along with the Military Officers Association of America, Ancient City Chapter.

The Atrium doors open at 9:00 am. On display in the Atrium will be the Traveling Vietnam and War on Terror Walls, and over 40 display tables from local Not for Profits, Military Groups, any many more military displays.

The Veterans Day Ceremony will start promptly at 11:00 am.

The Keynote speaker is BG William Temple, Deputy Commanding General, Florida Army National Guard.

Patriotic entertainment is by the St. Augustine High School Chorale.

This is a free event with plenty of onsite free parking.



ST JOHNS COUNTY 2023 VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, November 11th. Anastasia Baptist Church.



Honoring All Who Served

**Keynote speaker: Brigadier General William Temple,
Deputy Commanding General, Florida Army National Guard**
**The St. Johns Center for the Arts Chamber Singers. Static Displays.
Video collage. Traveling Vietnam and Global War On Terrorism walls.
Participation by JROTC and Sea Cadets.**



**With special recognition of our
“Global War On Terrorism” veterans.**



**Doors open 9 AM. Program begins at 11 AM.
1650 A1A South (on Anastasia Island). Free parking on site.**

Organized by the St. Johns County Veterans Council

Info at: rothfeldm@gmail.com

ST. JOHNS COUNTY VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION

11 NOVEMBER, 2023

ANASTASIA BAPTIST CHURCH



This year we especially recognize all those who donned the uniform during the "Global War On Terrorism." The shock and anger arising in millions of Americans in the aftermath of the 9/11 twin tower strikes were reminiscent of those after the Pearl Harbor attack, sixty years earlier. In both cases, a vicious war of global dimensions followed. Notably, as in all previous generations, millions of Americans left their homes to rally round the flag and shield their country from the further danger sure to follow. The 20th century WWII ended relatively quickly. The 21st century war on terrorism stretched over two decades, yet we note with special pride that the millions of American women and men who participated in it were all volunteers, including hundreds of thousands from Florida. Here, the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team has just completed training at Ft. Hood Texas in early 2010 before deploying 7,000 miles east for combat duty in Iraq.



While the anti-terror mission continues in far flung crisis areas around the globe, with this year's withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan major combat forces have returned once more to their homeland. It is now time to recognize the sacrifices all those in uniform made, whether at home or deployed abroad. **Join us in this tribute.**

**Anastasia Baptist Church, 1650 A1A South.
On Anastasia Island. Free parking on site.
Doors to exhibits open 9 AM.
Program begins 1100.
Info at: rothfeldm@gmail.com**



**Organized by:
The St. Johns County Veterans Council**



Jacksonville National Cemetery

Support Committee

October 11, 2023

Mr. Bill Dudley – Chairman
Veterans Council of St. Johns County
P.O. Box 2117
St. Augustine, FL 32085

Dear Bill,

On behalf of the Support Committee at Jacksonville National Cemetery, we extend our sincere thanks for your support toward the purchase of a golf cart for The Jacksonville Ladies. This dedicated group of Ladies are present at every service for our Veterans standing alongside and supporting the families as their loved are interred. But when there is no family or friends present a Jacksonville Lady is there to honor them and full filling their mission that “no Veteran will be buried alone in the Jacksonville National Cemetery”.

Thank you again, we appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Mike Smith

Michael Smith -Chairman
Support Committee
Jacksonville National Cemetery

Pat Welch

Pat Welch - Treasurer
Support Committee
Jacksonville National Cemetery

Greetings,

On behalf of The Jacksonville Ladies, we want you to know how much we appreciate your generous donation in support of the purchase of a golf cart for our Ladies to use when we are attending services for our Veterans, their spouses, or their minor children. It is heartwarming to know that our mission is so appreciated by you and many others. It indeed is a mission from our hearts, and we are so honored to be able to do it for our Veterans.

Warmest regards,



Linda Edell – Chairwoman
The Jacksonville Ladies



SAVE THE DATE!

NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

SATURDAY, DEC. 16, 2023



WREATHS *across* AMERICA



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

2023 Wreath Sponsorship Order Form

Sponsored wreaths are placed on grave markers at state and national veterans' cemeteries, as well as at local and community cemeteries each December for National Wreaths Across America Day.

Your donation will ensure the placement of a veteran's wreath for one or more veterans laid to rest at the participating location of your choice.

All sponsored veteran wreaths are shipped directly to the location selected by the sponsor on this form. Wreaths are not shipped to individual wreath sponsors.

CHECKS PAYABLE TO
WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA
SEND TO:
VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST JOHNS COUNTY
P.O. Box 2117
St. Augustine, FL 32085
questions? Call 904-347-8293

SPONSORSHIP TYPE	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Individual = 1 Wreath	\$17.00		
Family = 4 Wreaths	\$68.00		
Small Business = 10 Wreaths	\$170.00		
Corporate = 100 Wreaths	\$1,700.00		

For quicker processing and the convenience of paying with a credit card, debit card, Google Pay, or PayPal, veteran wreaths may be sponsored online by scanning the QR Code above or by visiting: www.wreathscrossamerica.org/FL0080

You should be the only one to enter your credit card information at checkout on the Wreaths Across America website. For your security, do not share this information with anyone else who offers to place an order for you. To verify the validity of the QR Code, always check that wreathscrossamerica.org is part of the web address when sponsoring wreaths online.

If you prefer to pay with a check, please complete this form and mail it along with your check to Wreaths Across America at the address listed in the box above.

CHECK #	CHECK DATE	SPONSOR NAME FOR DISPLAY
GROUP ID(s)	FL0080	EMAIL ADDRESS
LOCATION ID(s)	FLNSA	PHONE #
DOLLAR AMOUNTS(s)		MAILING ADDRESS

To split your donation between multiple groups and/or locations, please list the IDs and dollar amounts for each.

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please note in memory/honor of requests do not place a wreath on a specific loved one's grave.

IN MEMORY OF REQUEST	The "In Memory Of" Name will be listed on the Wreaths Across America online Remember Wall, along with your personal message.	IN HONOR OF REQUEST	An email will be sent to your chosen recipient from Wreaths Across America letting them know of your donation of sponsored veteran wreaths in their honor.
NAME FOR MEMORY WALL POST		RECIPIENT NAME	
SPONSOR EMAIL ADDRESS		RECIPIENT EMAIL ADDRESS	
MESSAGE (optional)		MESSAGE (optional)	

Thank you for supporting our mission to REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH!



Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame

The Florida Veterans' Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those military veterans who, through their works and lives during or after military service, have made a significant contribution to the state of Florida through civic, business, public service or other pursuits. It is not a traditional military hall of fame, as it focuses on post-military contributions to the State of Florida.

Class of 2023 Inductees

David Abramowitz, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Dennis O. Baker, Commander, U.S. Navy, (Ret)

John E. Bircher III, Colonel U.S. Army (Ret)

David Blair Craig, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Dr. Benjamin Findley, Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Michael Fleming, Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps/ U.S. Army (Ret)

R. Craig Ham, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret)

Gerald Hollingsworth, MD, Colonel, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Joseph Kittinger, Colonel, United States Air Force (Ret)

Henry Lowery, Chief Warrant Officer 5, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret)

Bruce Melnick, Commander, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret)

Frederic Raymond, Major General, U.S. Army (Ret)

Walter E. Raysick, Sr., Master Chief U.S. Navy (Ret)

Leon J. Roy, IV, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

Edward C. Sheffield, U.S. Army Veteran

Joseph G. Sicinski, U.S. Air Force Veteran

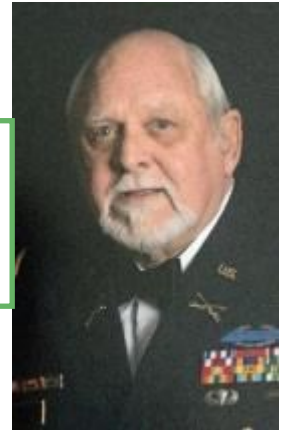
Alene Tarter, Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret)

Dewayne Thrift, U.S. Air Force Veteran

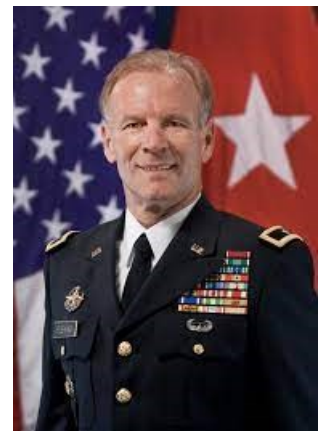
Donn Weaver, U.S. Army Veteran

Ellsworth Williams, Jr., Major, U.S. Army (Ret)

**LTC Blair
Craig**



**Brigadier
General,
Michael
Fleming**



The Veterans Council congratulates all veterans for their service in uniform and afterwards.

Local Veterans LTC Blair Craig & BG Michael Fleming are from NE FL and do much for local veterans and their families.

Jana Angel & local principal fly high with Blue Angels

JACKSONVILLE BEACH, Fla. – Ready to hear about the ultimate field trip?

This week a local educator took to the skies alongside the U.S. Navy Blue Angels.

The nationally recognized precision flight team tours the country sharing “the magic of flight” with thousands of viewers each year.

Out of thousands watching, a fortunate few can experience the G force-filled flight as a passenger.

Lakeside Junior High School Principal Dustin James was one of those lucky few to be chosen to climb into the cockpit of the No. 7 Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet earlier this week and experience a day with “The Blues.”

River City Live host Jana Angel and James shared the day together, hanging tough through barrel rolls, inverted, loops, and many other maneuvers you can see for yourself this weekend!

If you want to catch The Blue Angels in action, don’t miss the Sea and Sky Air Show from 1-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.



**DANNY GARCIA, WALKING MAN
PRESENTS**



**WORLD
CHANGERS**
— **CONCERT** —

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

FEATURING



EXPERIENCE THE EAGLES



Tickets on sale @ The AMP Box Office
or www.theamp.com



TICKETS ON SALE NOW
AT ST. AUGUSTINE AMPHITHEATRE BOX OFFICE OR ONLINE AT WWW.THEAMP.COM

The World Changers Concert is Fri., Dec 8th at 6:30pm at the The St. Augustine Amphitheatre to honor and thank God, veterans, first responders, and their families. Guests of honor include Gold Star families who have lost military family members in the line of duty, to acknowledge their loss, grief, and continued healing.

The concert event will feature a favorite central Florida band, The Long Run (TLR), an Eagles tribute band. Event guest speaker is national bestseller Karen Vaughn, author of “World Changer”, the story of her son, Navy Seal Aaron Vaughn.

If you are interested in donating or sponsoring seats for our worthy vets, first responders, and families, please contact Director Chuck Burke at flaburke@hotmail.com.

Event Page: <https://thegarcias.cc/>

Buy Event Tickets: <https://www.theamp.com/.../detail/the-world-changers-concert>

Tickets on sale @ The AMP Box Office
or www.theamp.com



[Contacts](#)

Chuck Burke 321-693-3451

Jackie Garcia 703-615-9006

Danny Garcia 571-422-0963

email: globalwalk7@gmail.com

www.globalwalk.cc



LEAVE A LEGACY

Military Honor Plaza

St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum



The St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum is proud to announce the opening of the Military Honor Plaza. The plaza will feature commemorative bricks to honor members of the nation's armed forces.



**MILITARY HONOR PLAZA OPENING
NOVEMBER 10th, 2023
10 - 11 AM.**

During World War II, the St. Augustine Light Station served as a United States Coast Guard station. Housed in the former Coast Guard Barracks built in 1941, *The Guardians of the First Coast: Building Readiness for World War II* exhibit highlights the history of northeast Florida in the early years of World War II.



Dressed in her patriotic best, the Museum invites you to a pre-Veterans Day ceremony to mark the opening of the Military Honor Plaza and to pay tribute to our Military past and present. The ceremony will be **November 10th, 2023 from 10-11 AM.**

Mr. Bill Dudley of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County will be the featured speaker for the event. Come hear Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline and meet our new Executive Director, Amy Craft Klassen. Learn more about the Light Station and its connection to our country's military. Music and special exhibits will be included.

RSVP for this free event: <https://form.jotform.com/232133846661153>

Military Honor Plaza Bricks - \$300



Each brick features 3 lines of 20 characters (including spaces and punctuation.) We suggest that the brick include the individual's name, rank and branch of service. Includes a certificate suitable for framing. We reserve the right to approve any text.

Bricks can be ordered by phone at 904.829.0745 ext. 245, in person at this event, or by emailing Karen Moore at kmoore@staugustinelighthouse.org.

The below information is needed to order a brick.

Purchaser's Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Optional: Gift Recipient's Name: _____

Recipient's Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Brick Message (3 lines available at 20 characters per line including spaces):

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



ST. AUGUSTINE
LIGHTHOUSE
& MARITIME MUSEUM

**VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

September 28, 2023



CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Dudley

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: General Mike Fleming

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKERS/GUESTS: Chairman Dudley

New attendees introduced themselves to the group.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: There were no minutes for the month of August. The August meeting was cancelled due to an approaching hurricane and the meeting venue is used for an evacuation shelter.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer John Mountcastle presented an updated Treasurer's Report. The Council's total liquid cash balance as July 26, 2023, was \$171,974.45. Treasurer Mountcastle went through some of the expenditures and deposits since that time and the new current balance is \$179,234.67. The Treasurer's Report was approved by voice vote with no changes.

AWARD PRESENTATION:

Chairman Dudley introduced two Veterans that will be inducted into the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame on November 14, 2023, in Tallahassee, FL. The two new inductees are Army Brigadier General Michael Fleming and Lieutenant Colonel Blair Craig. A well-deserved recognition for both gentlemen.

SPEAKERS:

ZACH MALAMUD, MARINE FOR LIFE

Zach Malamud gave a presentation on the organization, Marine for Life Net-

work Program, and its mission. The mission statement of Marine for Life is to “Take Care of Our Own.” The Marine for Life helps Marines, and their families transition back into the civilian world. They help Marines and soldiers but will turn no Veteran in need away. They help the Veterans find jobs, educational needs, refer them to Veterans Administration, tell them about the GI Bill and any other needs a Veteran may use during their transition period. They provide mentorship in order to help the Veteran adapt to their surroundings. Those in need can reach out to Marine for Life at their website, www.marineforlife.org. The floor was open to questions and answers.

MIKE O’BRIEN, 5-STAR VETERANS CENTER

Mike O’Brien introduced himself and gave a presentation of the 501(3)c organization 5-Star Veterans Center and how they can help the Veterans of St. Johns County. The 5-Star Veterans’ mission statement is “Rebuild the lives of veterans in crisis to ensure they thrive in civilian life.” The program has been operating for the last 12 years. Mr. O’Brien described the organization and what they want to accomplish and assist with the Veterans in need. They help the Veteran in crisis by providing a “Passport to Independence” with an intensive 12-month program. They provide the stability of on-site housing and mental health services. An individualized treatment plan is developed to restore a Veteran’s mental health and well-being. The goal is to get the Veteran back to independent living. After Mr. O’Brien presentation, the floor was open to questions and answers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE UPDATE, JOSEPH MCDERMOTT

Mr. McDermott gave an update on the Veterans Service Office. Business has not slowed down in the Veterans Service Office; they are still working on many PAC ACT claims. Because of the number of claims going the Veterans Administration, it could take 4-6 months to receive an answer to the claim. Last month there were 600 veterans that came through the office. Unfortunately, there has been a turnover in the office. There are currently interviews taking place to replace these employees. The positions should be filled soon and the

office back to working at full staff. The office will continue to move forward.

VETERANS TREATMENT COURT, JOHN LESLIE

Mr. Leslie introduced himself, Mentor Coordinator for the St. Johns and Putnam County Veterans Treatment Court. Although the Treatment Court is actually taking Veterans from 6 other counties throughout the NE Florida area.

The Treatment Court is in its 7th year and brought in 135 veterans into the program and has graduated 78 participants. There are 36 veterans currently inflow and 25-27 will be in court next session on the docket. The next session is scheduled for September 29th at 10:00am in Room 355 of the Judicial Complex. All are invited to attend and observe the Treatment Court. Mr. Leslie is looking for any new mentors that would be interested in helping in the future. Currently there are 16 mentors and 20 are needed. The Treatment Court has graduated 81 participants and 5 graduated in the last session. There have been 21 terminations, unsuccessful completions for various reasons. The Treatment Court will have a table with information at the upcoming Veterans Day event on November 11th.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Dudley also gave an update on the upcoming Veterans Day program that will be held on November 11, 2023. The theme for this year's program will be on the Global War on Terrorism and held at Anastasia Baptist Church. The program will honor all the Veterans that have served in the last 20 years on the war on terrorism. They will be recognized for their service and presented with a pin to honor them. The speaker will be Brigadier General William Temples. Gold Star Mothers will also be honored that day. A large turnout is expected with 1,000-1,200 people attending.

Chairman Dudley also discussed the upcoming induction ceremony for the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame that will be held in Tallahassee on November 14th that the Council will be attending. Twenty Veterans will be inducted on that day.

The Wreaths Across America Program will be held on December 16th and the

forms are available to order the wreaths. Prices were discussed.

Chairman Dudley also talked about the new homeless shelter that will coming to St. Augustine on SR 16. Other properties are also being looked at to add to the space available. Site work should start around the end of November. Completion is hoped to take place around the end of July 2024. Due to cost, a new design has had to be implemented and Chairman Dudley shared pictures of what the new site will look like.

There will be a golf tournament held by the Marine Corp League on October 9th. The tournament proceeds will go to the Toys for Tots campaign.

Danny and Jackie Garcia discussed their organization, "Global Walk," and the World Changers Concert that will be held on December 8, 2023, at the Amphitheater. The theme of the concert is to Honor and Thank God, Veterans, First Responders, and families. They are asking companies and corporations for sponsorship to help in accomplishing this concert. Twenty tickets were presented to the Veterans Service Office and 20 tickets were presented to the Council for distribution.

The floor was opened to all others that had information to share with the Veterans Council.

Next Veterans Council meeting will be held on Thursday, October 26th beginning at 7:00pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Dudley, Chairman

From Sheriff Hardwick

The first week in October, I had the pleasure of speaking at the 7th Annual Toys for Tots Golf Tournament. The Nease High School JROTC once again presented the colors and did a phenomenal job. I had the honor of coining the members of the ROTC program afterwards— awesome group of young individuals!



From Lucia Viti

St Augustine Record, The Daily Briefing

**St. Augustine's Roy H. Hinman II, MD,
was recently inducted into Oklahoma's**

**Rogers State University's Military School Hall of Fame in
Claremore, Oklahoma.**



**Only Oklahoma Military Academy Alumni who have achieved
outstanding accomplishments are inducted into the school's
prestigious hall of fame. The 37-year Army veteran, now re-
tired as a Colonel, served in Iraq, Germany, Korea, Kuwait,
Nicaragua, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Ecuador, and the Dominican
Republic.**

**During his military tenure, the physician and father of five
opened Island Doctors in St. Augustine in 1991. Still active in
his practice, Dr. Hinman and Island Doctors employ more
than 600 Floridians in 59 locations in St. Augustine, Gaines-
ville, Pensacola, Naples, and Jacksonville.**

**Dr. Hinman also helped to launch St. Augustine's Indianhead
Explorations LLC. The veteran owned business recycles and
repurposes materials that would otherwise be discarded into
landfills, leached into groundwater, or burned such as clear-
ing debris, yard trash and tree clippings into compost.**

Photo Courtesy of Army Colonel (Ret.) Roy Hinmann II

Council Chairman William Dudley speaks at the DAR "Bells Across America" Celebration

Mrs. Carol Katherine H. Burtin
285 South Matanzas Boulevard
Saint Augustine, Florida 32080

(904) 824-1268

September 25, 2023

Bill Dudley,
Veterans Council
200 San Sebastian View
St. Augustine, FL 32084

Dear Bill,

Once again, I thank you on behalf of the members of the Maria Jefferson Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for your attendance and speech at our September 17th celebration of BELLS ACROSS AMERICA.

Each year when we honor the anniversary of the signing of our United States Constitution in Philadelphia, September 17th at 4 PM in the year 1787, I wonder at the genius of those men, from farmers to lawyers and doctors, riding by horseback to Philadelphia, staying in tiny boardinghouse rooms, and working in Carpenter's Hall, with windows closed for security, in the hot, humid days, finally agreeing on the document which has ruled our country ever since.

Thanks, so much, for joining our celebration.

Sincerely,



Kay Burtin, for the Constitution Committee
Maria Jefferson Chapter, NSDAR



Hope 4 Veterans

Providing a group where women veterans come together for socialize, education and other activities that will help decrease the challenges women face. We help support Women Veterans to their Medical Appointments, C&P Exams. We help with claims through the women veterans of Disable American Veterans. We Are Based in Wisconsin and In Florida.

A. Hope4Sisters Pilot Program- Assist Women Veteran Sisters as a volunteer throughout Florida within their VA Medical System (within 1-2hr limit) Variety Appointments: CP Exams within or without the VA System, ER -On Call Status, Medical appointment to help support and educate the Sisters Medical Needs.

B. Claim Assist- Assist Women Veterans Sister DAV Women Service Officers within Florida with their Claims, MST/ PTSD and variety of others concerns regarding claims. Add locations women veteran's chapters and phone numbers.

C. Art/ Holistic -Assist Women Veterans Sisters with Writing, Photography and Creative Art with Sister Support communication. Can do telehealth over the phone or computer! We do have a art studio at Gainesville VA so Far. These Art/ Holistic want to recognize in May at the Women Days events/ Conference.

D. Free Laptops- Assist Women Veterans with providing Free Laptop for Educational/ Schooling/Employment Or Starting a Business needs. One Laptop per Women Veteran while supplies last. Training Specialized Security/ General Use operation system is an option too. Lynn Husband is a trained IT computer Foren-

sics can provide additional training for possible job positions. Free Updates or Virus scans on your personal computer. Can provide additional computer support, fee if you need new parts for functional computer use. Sponsors/ Donors colleges/ Schools

E. Inspirational Hope Baskets-Assist and provide Support for Women Veterans Sister in time of need to provide Personalize Inspirational Hope Baskets. Email: Provide the story why this women veteran could use an inspirational basket and provide any personalization info to place in the baskets such as: Children age, Hobbies, Likes and dislikes and most important needs.

F. Women Day- (May)Assisting Women Veterans Sisters on a time of Relaxation and ME time. Women Day will provide resources, Holistic recreation by other Women Veteran skills such as Massage therapy, Art, Essential Oils, yoga, Storytelling, Accupuncture, water activities and additional fun activities to revive, and rejuvenate to take care of themselves. Email: Provide Skills for retreat.

G. Basic Service Dog Education-Assist Women Veterans with Education and the process of Service Dog Training ADA Laws. Assisting with Training with CGC and what to look for, any questions.



MACV-SOG: The Vietnam-Era Special Operators You've Probably Never Heard Of

©Photo Credit: United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)



You've heard of the elite Navy SEALs and Green Berets who conducted guerrilla and counter-guerrilla operations, trained local troops and quashed enemy uprising in Vietnam. However, you've likely never heard of MACV-SOG, comprised of members from both forces, as well as the CIA. Together, they made up a unit more covert than any other during the war.

MACV-SOG was tasked with undertaking various forms of unconventional warfare in Vietnam, including reconnaissance and rescue missions, psychological warfare and capturing enemy prisoners. They conducted a number of covert operations, which had a profound effect on the outcome of the conflict.

MACV-SOG's top-secret beginnings



MACV-SOG, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam - Studies and Observations Group, was established on January 24, 1964. It was made up of members from the US military's most elite forces: Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Air Force commandos, CIA operatives and those who'd served in the Marine Corps' reconnaissance units.

MACV-SOG actions in Vietnam were controlled by the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities at the Department of Defense, as it gave them the ability to conduct missions outside of South Vietnam. Control of the group was eventually given to the US military.

Much of MACV-SOG's work was conducted in North Vietnam, which had to remain top secret, as the official American position was that US forces weren't fighting outside of the South. The group also spent time conducting operation in Laos and Cambodia, due to the importance of the Ho Chi Minh Trail to the North Vietnamese Army (NVA).

Given the extremely dangerous nature of the work they undertook, MACV-SOG was comprised entirely of volunteers. Their work was so dangerous, in fact, that the casualty rate for operatives was 100 percent - they knew they'd either receive a Purple Heart for their actions or come home in a body bag.



Unidentifiable Americans

Given the top-secret nature of their operations, MACV-SOG had very particular uniform requirements designed to make them unidentifiable as Americans. They donned the tiger stripe camouflage commonly associated with the South Vietnamese, and they didn't carry any ID, including dog tags and patches. The Green Berets also didn't wear their identifiable headgear.

As for weapons, MACV-SOG generally carried either a CAR-15 or AK-47, as well as M79 grenade launchers, all of which had their serial numbers removed, so they couldn't be identified. Each was carefully attached to the individual in a way that would render any noise from their movement non-existent. The guns were carried with a canvas strap, while the M79s were attached with a D-ring covered in tape.

Operators also carried additional weapons, including fragmentation and V40 mini grenades. For many, their weapons of choice were as unconventional as the missions they undertook. One particular MACV-SOG member, Staff Sgt. Robert Graham, decided to use a 55-pound bow with razor-edged arrows, which he pulled out when his ammo ran low.

Ho Chi Minh Trail

The Ho Chi Minh Trail was the main area of operations for MACV-SOG, given its importance to the guerrillas they fought against. The group's primary role here was to be the boots on the ground, providing intelligence back to Saigon. They took photographs, stole enemy documents and bugged communication lines.

These were extremely dangerous missions, and those tasked with running them were heavily aided by local forces, who made up the majority of a unit's numbers - two to four Americans were typically paired with between four and nine South Vietnamese guerrillas. In an interview with History of MACV-SOG, Jim Bolen discussed the details of running missions along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, saying every one he ran took place along the network's arteries.

There would be extensive enemy encampments attached to the trail, which housed thousands of soldiers. Two examples of these terrible odds were the mission on Thanksgiving Day 1968, which saw a six-man team face an enemy force of 30,000, and Frank D. Miller's solo encounter with 100 NVA troops.

MACV-SOG operations behind enemy lines

In his interview with History of MACV-SOG, Jim Bolen also revealed that he and other operatives were responsible for planting seismic sensors along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which were monitored

by Lockheed C-130E Blackbirds and would inform them of significant enemy movement.

Through this and other forms of reconnaissance, it's believed MACV-SOG provided 75 percent of American intelligence about the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

MACV-SOG had another purpose for operating along the Ho Chi Minh Trail: using it to get behind enemy lines to engage in prisoner snatching. This was considered one of the most dangerous missions. Prisoner snatching could be done as either the primary goal of a mission or a secondary one, should the opportunity present itself. Either way, it was heavily encouraged by superior officers.

Prisoner snatching behind enemy lines

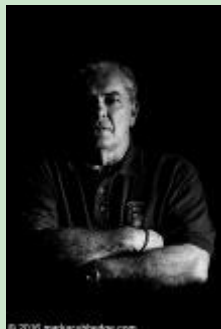
MACV-SOG members were given \$100 for capturing an enemy soldier, as well as R&R, while their local comrades were given new watches and other cash amounts. With this program in place, they captured 12 soldiers in Laos in 1966 and acquired important information from them, such as troop movements, sizes and base locations.

In order to successfully snatch their prisoners, MACV-SOG had to get creative. Lynne Black, a MACV-SOG operator, figured out the precise amount of C-4 needed to knock out a man without killing him (you can imagine the test process). This required an operator to place the explosive along the trail and wait for an enemy combatant to walk near enough to remotely detonate the C-4, swoop in and leave with their unconscious target.

MACV-SOG was involved in many of the major engagements that took place over the course of the Vietnam War, including Operation Steel Tiger, the Tet Offensive, Operation Tiger Hound, Operation Commando Hunt and the Easter Offensive. Despite this, their involvement was largely kept a secret until the 1980s.

It took until 2001 for the group's members to be formally recognized, with them being awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

Local Vietnam Veteran, MACV-SOG Tom Waskovich was the first Chairman of the St Johns Veterans Council and lives in St Augustine Beach



In 1966, Waskovich was awarded the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry from Col. Ngo The Lam, commander of the South Vietnamese special commandos.

Military Nurses

This year, in honor of the 70th Anniversary of the end of the Korean War, we would like to highlight the service and bravery of one of the women who served during “The Forgotten War.”

The military nurses who served in the combat theater proved once again how essential military nurses are in war. Approximately 1,750 nurses and medical specialists such as physical therapists and dietitians served in the Korean Theater.

The Air Force Nurse Corps had only been in existence for a year when the war started in 1950. There was a severe shortage of trained flight nurses throughout war, and some were assigned evacuation duty although they did not have flight training.

The nurses served aboard flights from Korea to Japan, Japan to Guam, Midway, Hawaii and the United States. They also served at Air Force hospitals in California and San Antonio, Texas. Flight nurses were responsible for dispensing medicine and keeping patients stable and comfortable during crowded and cold flights. Flight nursing was not only demanding, it was also dangerous.

Before dawn on September 26, 1950, a C-54 carrying military personnel, including two flight nurses, crashed into the Sea of Japan, drowning many passengers, including Captain Vera Brown. Lieutenant (later Captain) Jonita (Bonham) Bovee, although injured, assisted others and was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for her actions.

The official citation states: “First Lieutenant Jonita R. Bonham performed meritorious service and distinguished herself while acting as Flight Nurse in medical air evacuation flights totaling one hundred seventy (170) hours from 25 July to 26 September 1950. Lieutenant Bonham flew in unarmed cargo type aircraft. On many occasions these aircraft were operating into and out of advance airfields

which were being subjected to enemy fire, transporting ammunition, rockets, bombs and other types of high explosives and inflammable material, under adverse weather conditions and over hazardous terrain. Despite these conditions, Lieutenant Bonham carried out her missions willingly and without complaint, continually comforting and caring for her patients. By her courage, ability and unselfish devotion to duty, Lieutenant Bonham has reflected great credit upon herself, her profession and the United States Air Force.”

Jonita (Bonham) Bovee, a native of Bennington, Oklahoma, joined the Army Nurse Corps in 1944 and served until 1946. When the Korean War broke out, she joined the Air Force Nurse Corps. During her service, she logged over 245 flight hours and helped evacuate over 600 wounded men. She was discharged from the service in 1952. Captain Jonita (Bonham) Bovee was the first female recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

On July 18, 2023, the Military Women’s Memorial was honored to have Captain Bovee’s children, Renee Bovee and Greg Bovee, donate their mother’s Distinguished Flying Cross and other memorabilia such as service records, correspondence, photographs, handbooks, and magazines to the Military Women’s Memorial Collection. It is through donations such as this that we can fully tell the story of our servicewomen’s dedicated and selfless service to the United States.



The CJ3 Foundation

A representative of the CJ3 Foundation will be speaking at the Veterans Council meeting on January 25, 2024.

Please make plans to join us then if not sooner.

The CJ3 Foundation provides advocacy services at no cost to the wounded/disabled American Heroes we support.

The CJ3 Foundation advocates on behalf of our Recipients to receive assistance they need/require.

This advocacy centers on providing Recipients with referrals for services or support to other organizations/agencies established to adequately address/help with specific Recipient issues/needs.

The CJ3 Foundation works as an interlocutor for and with other VSO's and non-profits who have like goals in order to assist Veterans in need.

The CJ3 Foundation also works to influence changes in policy and legislation that adversely affects our Wounded/Disabled U.S. Military Service Member/Veteran, Law Enforcement, Firefighter, and Emergency/First Responder brothers and sisters.

The CJ3 Foundation provides a forum to formalize our advocacy efforts for these groups on issues of concern; whether it is a policy change or legislative change required.

The CJ3 Foundation builds upon this by engaging legislators and their staff to advocate for changes in policy and legislation that adversely affects our constituents.

Finally, the CJ3 Foundation also partners with hunting, fishing, and other recreational type groups to provide much needed rest and relaxation activities to our Recipients and their families.



COMBAT PAPER[®] WORKSHOP

your story matters!

Combat Paper[®] is a hand papermaking workshop facilitated by artist and Iraq war veteran Drew Francis Cameron that teaches veterans to make paper from United States military uniforms.

Fridays: Combat Paper[®] Project, Process, and Practice.

Saturdays and Sundays: Workshops will cover the technical aspects of traditional hand papermaking techniques and rendering fabric into pulp and paper. Participants will create artwork on freshly formed sheets of paper using an innovative pulp stencil printmaking process.

You are welcome to register for one or two sessions and bring your own or use our donated uniforms. Bring photos, drawings, maps, and writings – to incorporate in the paper you will create.

Combat Paper[®] at combatpaper.org

Department of Art, Art History, and Design

UNF Printmaking Studio
Building 45/Room 1603

SCAN TO REGISTER



No previous experience necessary!

More info: (904) 620-5131 | a.j.felix@unf.edu

Session One

Friday, September 15

2 p.m. Presentation

3-5 p.m. Breaking Rag

5-6 p.m. Artist Talk

Saturday, September 16

10-6 p.m.

Papermaking/Printmaking

Sunday, September 17

10-4 p.m.

Papermaking/Printmaking

Session Two

Friday, November 3

2 p.m. Presentation

3-5 p.m. Breaking Rag

5-6 p.m. Artist Talk

Saturday, November 4

10-6 p.m.

Papermaking/Printmaking

Sunday, November 5

10-4 p.m.

Papermaking/Printmaking

All events are free and open to the public



Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation provides college scholarships and educational counseling to military children, from all branches, who lost a parent in the line of duty.

We cover all college-related costs and there is a big need for our services as the VA does not cover the full cost of college. There is a \$25,000 average gap to cover one student for four years and we need your help.



Scan here to support the children of those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

To mail a contribution, please send checks to:

Children of Fallen Patriots Foundation
ATTN: Courtney Nyren
1818 Library Street, Suite 500
Reston, VA 20190

FALLENPATRIOTS.ORG

Thank you for your support of our mission. CFC #69859



CFP is among top <1% of charities to receive a 100% rating in 2022

2023 RIVERWOOD MEN'S CLUB CHARITY GOLF EVENT
BENEFITTING
VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY
AT WORLD GOLF VILLAGE, SLAMMER & SQUIRE ON 11/13/2023
SPONSORSHIPS



1. Platinum Sponsor - \$2500. Complimentary entry for a four person golf team, individual banner at registration table and awards luncheon, individual corporate business table at awards luncheon, business flyer/brochure in registration bag, hole sponsorship sign, special invite to Veterans Council VIP events, recognition on all tournament flyers and the main sponsor banner, special recognition in all media events.

2. Gold Sponsor - \$1500. Complimentary entry for two players, individual banner at registration table, business flyer/brochure in the registration bag and at the awards luncheon, hole sponsorship sign, special invite to Veterans Council VIP events, recognition on all tournament flyers and the main sponsor banner.

3. Tournament Special Events Sponsor - \$500

- *Registration Gift Bag Sponsor
- *Beverage Sponsor
- *Luncheon Sponsor
- *Team Prize Sponsor
- *Putting Contest
- *Closet-to-Pin (CTP) Contest
- *Special Team CTP Contest

Individual sign at location of event sponsored, hole sponsorship sign, business flyer/brochure at awards luncheon, recognition on all tournament flyers and the main sponsor banner.

4. Hole Sponsor - \$175. Sponsorship sign at one hole, recognition on all tournament flyers and the main sponsor banner.

5. Gift donations - Gifts suitable as prizes for tournament competition and for silent/live auctions and raffles will receive special recognition on all tournament flyers and the main sponsor banner.

Sponsor/Donation Info

Business or Individual Name: _____
 Contact Phone /Email: _____
 Sponsorship Type (See Above): _____
 Gift Item/Value of Donation: _____

Sponsorship/Donation Contacts: Jim Monahan, jimmonahan237@gmail.com

Please make checks payable to: Veterans Council of St. Johns County

Note: Please indicate in the check memo line "Veterans Council of St. Johns County Charity Golf Event"

Mail to: Jim Monahan, 118 Goldenrod Park Road, Ponte Vedra, FL. 32081.

**Thank you for your generous donation that will help improve the quality
of our Veterans Lives**

*Donors will receive a letter from the charity documenting the value of their donation after
conclusion of the event*



**There was NO meeting of the
Veterans Council of St. Johns
County in August because of
the Hurricane.**

SWISHER &
A FAMILY-OWNED COMPANY. EST. 1861

DREW ESTATE
THE REBIRTH OF CIGARS | ESTELI, NICARAGUA
Premium Cigar Subsidiary of Swisher

INVITE YOU TO A

MILITARY/VETERAN APPRECIATION EVENT



LOCATION:

★★★ **DAPPER D'S CIGARS ST. JOHNS** ★★★

150 Fountains Way Ste 1, St Johns, FL 32259

**NOV
09**

LIVE ART x LOUNGE x CIGAR DEALS
DEMO x CHALLENGE COIN
4:00-8:00 PM WITH QUALIFYING PURCHASE

DRINKS - FOOD - RAFFLES ★

IN SUPPORT OF THE FOLLOWING VETERAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:





You've made our country
A BETTER PLACE.

Enjoy your well-earned retirement at Silver Creek.

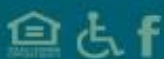
Thank you veterans for your service and sacrifice! At Silver Creek, you can live life as you choose with greater freedom, comfort and independence through the unique living options at our community - including independent concierge living, assisted living, enhanced assisted living and memory care.

Discover first-class amenities, holistic wellness programming, gourmet all-day dining and vibrant activities while enjoying camaraderie and friendship at our close-knit community.

Call **800-821-8170** to schedule a tour and learn more.



165 Silver Lane | St. Augustine, FL 32084 | SilverCreekRetirement.com



Independent Concierge Living – Assisted Living
Memory Care – Short-Term Stays

Assisted Living Facility #12928

Explore VA benefits and health care, <https://www.va.gov>

Health care

Apply for VA health care, find out how to access services, and manage your health and benefits online.



Disability

File a claim for disability compensation for conditions related to your military service, and manage your benefits over time.

Education and training

Apply for and manage your GI Bill and other education benefits to help pay for college and training programs.

Careers and employment

Apply for vocational rehabilitation services, get support for your Veteran-owned small business, and access other career resources.

Pension

Apply for monthly payments for wartime Veterans and survivors with limited or no income who meet certain age and disability requirements.

Housing assistance

Find out if you're eligible for a VA-backed home loan. If you have a service-connected disability, see if you qualify for a housing grant to help you live more independently.

Life insurance

Explore VA life insurance options for Veterans, service members, and families. Manage your policy online, file claims for benefits, and access helpful resources.

Burials and memorials

Get help planning a burial in a VA national cemetery, order a headstone or other memorial item to honor a Veteran's service, and apply for survivor and dependent benefits.

Records

Apply for a printed Veteran ID card, get your VA benefit letters and medical records, and learn how to apply for a discharge upgrade.

Service member benefits

Find out what benefits you may be eligible for during service and which time-sensitive benefits to consider when separating or retiring.

Family member benefits

Learn about the benefits you may qualify for as a spouse, dependent, or survivor. And find out what you're eligible for as a family member caring for a Veteran with disabilities.

VA department information

Learn more about the VA departments that manage our benefit and health care

From Veterans Council Chairman Bill Dudley, as of Sept. 1, 2023

Update on Veteran homeless in St Johns County

The count of Veteran's without housing at the time of last year's stand down was approximately 38 Veterans. Out of the 38 Veterans, only about 9 showed up for the stand down last year. The reason for the low turn out then is because those 38 Veterans were all engaged in case management services and working on housing placements. A majority of those Veterans at that time were able to be placed in hotel rooms while waiting on housing assistance due to special funding that came through because of Covid. This accounted for the low turn out at the stand down.

San Marcos Heights, an income-based apartment complex, opened up shortly after the stand down and we were able to place 13 Veterans without housing there. In January of 2023, the VA conducted a count of our homeless Veteran population and at that time there were 24. These 24 Veterans were all engaged with case management services to assist them in getting into permanent housing.

As of this date, we have approximately 12 homeless veterans that are all working with case managers for housing assistance. We have another income-based apartment complex opening up currently, Victoria's Crossing, and we have 10 units that are set aside for Veteran's preference there. St Johns Housing Partnership is opening Patriot Place soon and we are working on completing applications for Veteran's to be housed there now. We will be able to house 6 Veterans at Patriot Place.

The VA and community partners are making great strides in efforts to reach our homeless Veterans in St Johns County. These include VA has outreach workers that begin the process of approval for HUD VASH and other appropriate housing opportunities, Changing Homelessness, The Veteran's Service Office, Home Again and The Society of St Augustine Street Outreach Team who seeks out homeless

Veterans and connects them to needed resources. These Veterans are connected to health, counseling and other resources while working on housing goals.

Because of the amazing work that is being done to reach out to our homeless Veterans, they are being connected to resources more quickly at this time. Community agencies are working tirelessly to help end the homeless situation in St Johns County and expect to be at functional zero by December of this year which means 3 or less homeless Veterans identified in St Johns County.

Since the need for a Veteran Stand Down is very low at this time, the Veteran's service office will continue to have military surplus on hand at the VSO as well as a well-stocked food pantry for those that are in need. Our Veteran Homeless Coordinator assists with connecting Veterans to housing and other resources as needed and is able to deliver supplies to them or will work with other VA and Changing Homelessness case managers to ensure they have clothing, shoes, bicycles, food, hygiene items and other surplus while they work on being qualified for housing assistance.

There are other plans in place currently for a Day Center that will provide homeless with laundry and shower facilities. This facility will also provide a place for case managers to meet with the homeless and provide resources to them. There are other projects and plans being discussed and that will assist our homeless population even more in the near future.

We are grateful for the amazing support from our wonderful volunteers who donate food to our pantry, refurbished bicycles, gas and food gift cards and other items that meet the immediate needs of our brothers and sisters. Thank you for your support!

'It really is a rare thing': Dunnellon Vietnam War veteran reconnects with former bunkmate

By Emma Delamo

DUNNELLON, Fla. (WCJB) - Nearly 60 years later, a Vietnam War veteran in Dunnellon is back in touch with an old friend from the war.

Veteran Gary Morgan lives in Wisconsin, but he got in contact with former veteran John Horton through a Vietnam veterans website.

The two started talking again and brought up Dunnellon resident Victor Rochette in conversation.

"John wanted to get ahold of him," said Morgan. "He asked me if I knew him and when I told him that he was my bunkmate, then he got hold of Vic and asked if it was okay that I called."

Gary and Victor were stationed in Memphis together in May of 1967. When Gary called Victor, he said Victor didn't remember him, but some old photos helped jog his memory.

"You put those two pictures side by side and you know it's the same guy. I mean this is legit, it's for real," said Rochette. "I texted him right back and I said 'Gary, that's you! It is you! Gary from Wisconsin.'"

56 years later, the two are reminiscing about old times.

"He tells me his whole story, what's been going on with him since we've last were together and I did the same," said Morgan. "We have so much more to talk about, so we'll be doing this for a long time."

They said they have swapped stories and made plans to meet again soon.

"My wife and I are going to visit him and his wife probably in January, February when it's warm there and cold here," said Morgan. "Then they'll come up and visit us in the summer."

Both men said the connections you make while deployed are priceless, but usually sizzle out, which is why they're excited to bring their friendship back to life.

"It really is a rare thing," said Rochette. "It's a blast from the past, that's all I can say. It can only get better from here, so I'm happy, happy, happy."



Guardian Gets Ranger Tab in First-Ever Achievement for Space Force

For the first time ever, a Space Force Guardian has graduated from the Army's arduous Ranger School, making history for the newest military service branch.



Capt. Daniel Reynolds, who is with the 4th Test and Evaluation Squadron out of Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado, graduated from Ranger School at Fort Moore, Georgia, on Oct. 13. An image shared by the Ranger School on Facebook showed him posing in front of a Space Force flag alongside other Guardians.

Reynolds graduating from Ranger School -- a two-month course filled with grueling physical training and exercises designed to educate participants on elite squad and platoon tactics -- is not only a first for the service, it bucks criticisms and stereotypes that Guardians aren't as active as other military service branches.

Read Next: [2,000 US Troops Ordered to Prepare for Deployment in Growing Response to Israel War with Hamas](#)

Reynolds has been challenging those norms throughout his career, and has broken several barriers as a Guardian.

Prior to graduating, and even before being accepted, Reynolds had to pass the Ranger Assessment Course, a 19-day evaluation course "designed to assess the physical and mental toughness of airmen and Guardians who are interested in attending Army Ranger School," the Air Force said in an August press release.

Reynolds was the sole Guardian alongside 15 airmen and 15 soldiers. Only 15 applicants met the standard to go on to Ranger School. He was one of them.

Last year, Reynolds became the first Guardian to graduate from the U.S. Army's Sapper Leader Course, a 28-day leadership program focused on educating combat engineers.

"Space is a warfighting domain, and Guardians are the leading edge of national defense across an increasingly complex front," Reynolds said in a press release last year. "To succeed, we have to be adaptive, enduring, and lethal. These are the fundamentals that the Sapper Leader Course emphasizes, and the skills that Guardians, as warfighters, bring to the joint fight every day."

In 2021, Reynolds made history when he became the first Space Force Guardian to graduate from the Army's Air Assault School.

"The best engineers in the world can be drawn from those who understand how to use the system operationally," Reynolds said in a Department of Defense press release last year. "Attending Air Assault School was a rare opportunity for a tester to study the intricacies of how a warfighter implements a military system."

Reynolds, whose hometown is in Germany, graduated from the Air Force Academy in 2017 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Air Force with a bachelor of science in aeronautical engineering degree, according to the Pentagon.

His first duty station was at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he served as a research fellow focused on NASA's next-generation lunar Space Station while working on his master's degree.

Less than two years after the Space Force became the newest military service, Reynolds transferred in the spring of 2021.

"When the Space Force was founded a few months after my graduation from MIT, my experiences there were at the forefront of my mind," Reynolds said in a release. "Having the opportunity to be a part of an incredible team working together to solve some of our nation's most complex problems spoke to my passion to serve."

The Air Force first began sending airmen to Ranger School in 1955; since then, around 350 have graduated from the course, according to the Air Force. Now, because of Reynolds, there is also one Guardian to join the list.



19th Annual
Marine & Navy FMF Corpsmen Memorial

Evergreen Cemetery
N Main St
Jacksonville, Florida

November 10, 2023
4 PM

Dedicated by Marines and Navy FMF Corpsmen
of the
Jacksonville

Semper Fidelis Society



We have a responsibility to never forget!

AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, GRENADA, BEIRUT, VIETNAM, KOREA, WWII, WWI...



~SEMPER FIDELIS~

ZEPHYRHILLS

FREE
TO THE
PUBLIC

NOV.
10-12



BATTLE FOR VETERANS

Florida's Largest Veterans Day Experience

November 10th-12th, 2023 - Fri, Sat & Sun - 10am-5pm
5200 Airport Rd, Zephyrhills, FL 33542

- Live World War II Reenactment With Tanks in Action
- Weapons Demonstration
- Military Vehicle Display
- Museum Open During Event
- Veterans Day Parade on Saturday - Downtown 11AM
- Food & Military Vendors
- Aircraft on Display

** Visit www.ZMMH.org for event updates **

Hosted by



Featured Guest

WW2Armor.org



From the St. Johns County Parks & Recreation Dept.

Do you know a Military Veteran with a *Blank Space* on their calendar? Check out our upcoming Veteran Programs (SJC Parks and Recreation's Version).

Veteran Fishing: Don't be overwhelmed by fishing regulations, *Shake It Off* and learn all about Keeping It Legal in September. Then join us to explore the *Wonderland* of Surf Fishing in October!

Veteran Art: Discover your artistic *Style* and try out a different art medium every month. Upcoming programs include Print Making and Pumpkin Painting!

Veteran Kayaking: *I Know Places* for some great wildlife viewing in and *Out Of The Woods* around Hallowes Cove and in Deep Creek this fall.

All You Had To Do Was Stay until the end of this post and you'd find the link for more information and program registration here: <https://bit.ly/46HMhEt>



wjct | PUBLIC MEDIA

Why "Thank you for your service" May Not be Enough: Talking to Our Veterans

November 6, 2023

ABOUT THE EVENT:

Join WJCT for a community conversation about the rewards and challenges of military life and exploring ways to express gratitude for someone's service. Clips will be shown from the PBS program, **After Action** featuring conversations about life before, during and after action that provide a deeper appreciation for those who've served.

November 6, 2023
6 PM - Reception
7 PM - Panel Discussion

SPONSORSHIP INCLUDES:

- Company name and logo on 30 television spots
- Logo inclusion in promotion on wjct.org
- Logo on E-blast invitation
- Company name recognition from the stage
- Signage at the event
- Sponsor may have a display table
- 4 reserved tickets to the event
- Association with a high-profile program

YOUR INVESTMENT: \$2,500

in partnership with



The Jacksonville Naval Museum Needs You!

SKILLS NEEDED:

Docents
Cleaning
Welders
Metal Workers
Painters
Cashiers
Electricians
& More

JACKSONVILLE NAVAL MUSEUM

We need

YOU!



Volunteers are the backbone of every museum!

Step up to help out today!

Please don't wait for someone else to do it.

*Email our Volunteer Coordinator at
volunteer@jaxnavalmuseum.org*



WHAT TO DO:

Submit your name & contact information along with your skills using the above email.

The flags in the poster represent the 46 missing men that do not have photos. (Their names are listed to the right of each column)



Camp Lejeune Water Victims Offered Quicker Payout Option by Navy and Justice Department

6 Sep 2023 Military.com |
By Rebecca Kheel



Some veterans and family members sickened during the decades of contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, will be able to choose to take a standard payout from the government if they want their claims resolved faster, the Navy and Justice Department announced Wednesday.

Under the so-called "elective option" unveiled Wednesday, claimants can get between \$100,000 and \$550,000, depending on their diagnosis and how long they were exposed to the toxic water.

Officials said they hope the new option will speed up processing for the tens of thousands of claims that have been filed since last year and more quickly give closure to veterans and others.

"The elective option is a critical step in bringing relief to qualifying claimants impacted by the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, who will now have an avenue for receiving quick and early resolution of claims under the Camp Lejeune Justice Act," Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta said in a news release Wednesday.

The Camp Lejeune Justice Act, which was passed last year as part of the sweeping PACT Act, created a pathway for former Marines, sailors and families poisoned by contaminated drinking water at the military base to sue and recover damages. Those harmed by the water can file an administrative claim with the Navy, and if the service denies the claim or takes longer than six months to respond, they can then sue in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina.

More than 93,000 administrative claims have been filed since the law was enacted, a

number that is expected to grow until the Aug. 10, 2024, deadline to file a claim, officials said Wednesday. Another 1,100 lawsuits have already been filed.

To qualify for the new elective option, claimants must have specific illnesses that have been previously linked to the chemicals at Camp Lejeune and been exposed to the water for a specific amount of time.

Those diagnosed with kidney cancer, liver cancer, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, leukemia and bladder cancer could receive settlements of \$450,000 if they were exposed for more than five years; \$300,000 if they were exposed between one year and five years; or \$150,000 if they were exposed between 30 and 364 days.

Those suffering from multiple myeloma, Parkinson's disease, kidney disease (end stage renal disease) or systemic sclerosis/systemic scleroderma would get settlement offers of \$400,000 for exposures of more than than five years; \$250,000 for between one years and five years of exposure; or \$100,000 for exposures between 30 and 364 days.

Claims involving death would get another \$100,000, according to the news release.

Officials will reach out to anyone who has already filed a claim who is eligible, the release adds. Once a settlement is offered, claimants have 60 days to accept or deny it, and if they accept it, they can expect to get paid within 60 days, according to Navy guidance. Claimants who deny the offer can still pursue their administrative claim or file a lawsuit, according to the guidance.

Those who don't qualify for the elective option can still file an administrative claim or sue, it adds.

More information on filing a Camp Lejeune water claim and the elective option is available at www.navy.mil/clja/.

The Florida Veterans Foundation extends its heartfelt gratitude to those who have contributed to supporting Florida Veterans by purchasing a Gadsden Flag license plate. Through the sales of these distinctive plates, the foundation raises funds that help provide essential programs, services, and outreach materials. With each purchase, supporters display their solidarity with Veterans and actively participate in improving their well-being and honoring their sacrifices. Get your plate today at:

<https://www.helpflvets.org/gadsden-plate>.



Ships and Submarines of the US Navy



Aircraft carrier

Multi-purpose aircraft carrier (nuclear-propulsion)



Gerald R Ford Class CVN

USS *Gerald R Ford* CVN-78
 USS *John F Kennedy* CVN-79
 USS *Dwight D Eisenhower* CVN-80
 USS *Carl Vinson* CVN-81

Nimitz Class CVN

USS *Nimitz* CVN-68
 USS *Dwight D Eisenhower* CVN-69
 USS *John F Kennedy* CVN-70
 USS *Carl Vinson* CVN-71
 USS *Abraham Lincoln* CVN-72
 USS *George Washington* CVN-73
 USS *John C. Stennis* CVN-74
 USS *Henry V. Taylor* CVN-75
 USS *Ronald Reagan* CVN-76
 USS *George H.W. Bush* CVN-77

Surface combatant

Guided missile cruiser



Ticonderoga Class CG

USS *Battlestar* CG-52
 USS *Michael S. Turner* CG-53
 USS *Anthony* CG-54
 USS *Leahurst* CG-55
 USS *San Antonio* CG-56
 USS *Lake Champlain* CG-57
 USS *Philippine Sea* CG-58
 USS *Peleliu* CG-59
 USS *Bennett* CG-60
 USS *Chawathale* CG-61
 USS *Langley* CG-62
 USS *Smith* CG-63
 USS *Shaw* CG-64
 USS *Stennis* CG-65
 USS *Wainwright* CG-66
 USS *Wainwright* CG-67
 USS *Wainwright* CG-68
 USS *Wainwright* CG-69
 USS *Wainwright* CG-70

Submarine

Submarine (nuclear-powered)



Los Angeles Class SSN

USS *Chicago* SSN-721
 USS *Keyhole* SSN-722
 USS *Indiana* SSN-723
 USS *Wasp* SSN-724
 USS *San Juan* SSN-725
 USS *Florida* SSN-726
 USS *Albatross* SSN-727
 USS *Hydra* SSN-728
 USS *Buwanan* SSN-729
 USS *Liberty* SSN-730
 USS *Admiral* SSN-731
 USS *Archer* SSN-732
 USS *Albatross* SSN-733
 USS *Albatross* SSN-734
 USS *Albatross* SSN-735
 USS *Albatross* SSN-736
 USS *Albatross* SSN-737
 USS *Albatross* SSN-738
 USS *Albatross* SSN-739
 USS *Albatross* SSN-740
 USS *Albatross* SSN-741
 USS *Albatross* SSN-742
 USS *Albatross* SSN-743
 USS *Albatross* SSN-744
 USS *Albatross* SSN-745
 USS *Albatross* SSN-746
 USS *Albatross* SSN-747
 USS *Albatross* SSN-748
 USS *Albatross* SSN-749
 USS *Albatross* SSN-750

Seawolf Class SSN

USS *Seawolf* SSN-581
 USS *Conquest* SSN-582
 USS *Greif* SSN-583

Virginia Class SSN

USS *Virginia* SSN-598
 USS *Florida* SSN-599
 USS *North Carolina* SSN-600
 USS *Alabama* SSN-601
 USS *South Carolina* SSN-602
 USS *Georgia* SSN-603
 USS *Mississippi* SSN-604
 USS *Alabama* SSN-605
 USS *Alabama* SSN-606
 USS *Alabama* SSN-607
 USS *Alabama* SSN-608
 USS *Alabama* SSN-609
 USS *Alabama* SSN-610
 USS *Alabama* SSN-611
 USS *Alabama* SSN-612
 USS *Alabama* SSN-613
 USS *Alabama* SSN-614
 USS *Alabama* SSN-615
 USS *Alabama* SSN-616
 USS *Alabama* SSN-617
 USS *Alabama* SSN-618
 USS *Alabama* SSN-619
 USS *Alabama* SSN-620

Ballistic missile submarine (nuclear-powered)

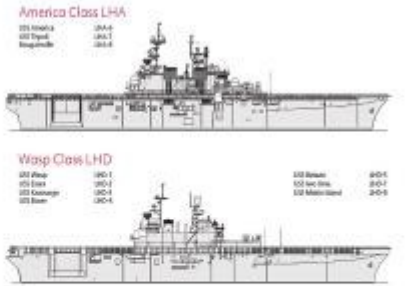


Ohio Class SSBN

USS *George Eastman* SSBN-621
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-622
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-623
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-624
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-625
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-626
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-627
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-628
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-629
 USS *Albatross* SSBN-630

Amphibious

Amphibious assault ship



America Class LHA

USS *America* LHA-6
 USS *Travis* LHA-7
 USS *Travis* LHA-8

Wasp Class LHD

USS *Wasp* LHD-1
 USS *Wasp* LHD-2
 USS *Wasp* LHD-3
 USS *Wasp* LHD-4
 USS *Wasp* LHD-5
 USS *Wasp* LHD-6
 USS *Wasp* LHD-7
 USS *Wasp* LHD-8
 USS *Wasp* LHD-9
 USS *Wasp* LHD-10

Amphibious transport dock



San Antonio Class LPD

USS *San Antonio* LPD-17
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-18
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-19
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-20
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-21
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-22
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-23
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-24
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-25
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-26
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-27
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-28
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-29
 USS *San Antonio* LPD-30



Stories of Service

St. Johns County Veterans Oral History Project



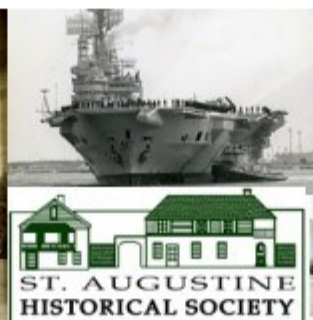
Stories of Service is an oral history project that aims to collect, document, and preserve the stories of local veterans for future generations by conducting audio interviews with them.



If you'd like to learn more about this project, contact Robert Covert:



904-825-2333 ext 203
robert@sahs1883.com



Hi Veteran Organization & Veteran Service Officers:

Save the Date, Veteran organization and reserve a table please

notify your members, to save this date January 6th 2024 at the VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena.

Service Officers can reserve a table for your Counties. I will send out others later to remind all of you, too keep you in the loop.

Semper Fidelis

Anthony(Tony)D'Aleo

Inducted in the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame 2022.

Past-President Nicholas J. Cutinha Chapter

VVA Chapter 1046

Cell # 904-910-2386

The logo features the letters 'V4V' in a large, bold, white serif font, centered on a horizontal red band.

VETS4VETS

Inform ★ Connect ★ Unite ★ Organize

"Brand New Day"

**Save the Date:
Quarterly Gathering
Saturday January 6th 2024**

Veterans Memorial Arena



3RD ANNUAL

Hear Her Voice, Hear Our Voices Gala

PRESENTS

Hero's Journey



11 • 4 • 23

At 06:00 PM

*Palencia Club
600 Palencia Club Dr,
St. Augustine, FL 32095*



GET YOUR TICKETS HERE

**Emcee:
Jasmine Boothe**



**Keynote Speaker:
Jean Gautreaux**



LAW ENFORCEMENT

K9 COMPETITION



Presented By:
K9s UNITED

SATURDAY, 1 - 5 P.M.

NOVEMBER 18, 2023

**BISHOP KENNY ATHLETIC COMPLEX
1055 KINGMAN AVE, JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207**

This event will showcase the remarkable skills of police dogs. K9 teams throughout the state will compete in a timed obstacle course meant to mimic situations the officers and dogs may encounter while doing police work.

All money will benefit K9s United to help fulfill their mission in supporting law enforcement K9 units here in NE Florida.



k9competition.eventbrite.com

\$5 Adults | Kids 18 & Under FREE | FREE Parking



K-9 Photobooth | Specialized Units | Kids Activities | Food Trucks



Remember

What Our Medal Represents

Red:

The 3 ancient Vietnamese Empires of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin

Yellow:

The Imperial color of Vietnam

Green:

Surrounded by expansive jungle

A handwritten signature in gold ink, located on the right side of the text block.

Inspired by Tet Media, the Nam



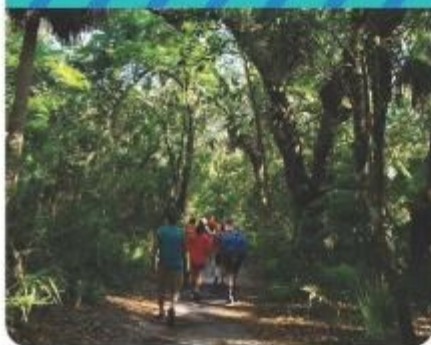
POWERED BY



MILITARY VETERAN

CAMP RETREAT

AT YMCA CAMP IMMOKALEE



November 17 – 18
FREE for Military Veterans
(any prior service)

YMCA CAMP IMMOKALEE

6765 Immokalee Rd. | Keystone Heights, FL 32656

We are inviting Military Veterans and a spouse or supporter to join us at no cost for a weekend of camp fun. Veterans will enjoy taking part in camp activities, such as canoeing, archery, the zipline and barn visits. We look forward to a memorable retreat and a chance for everyone to relax and become a kid again!

Ages 18 and older only please.

Scan the QR code to register!

This is for all prior service members regardless of discharge status. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. A \$25 deposit per person is required to be refunded only upon check-in.



Important:

Bring Photo ID and signed waiver to receive a complimentary camo tote and camp map. Each person will need to bring their own twin-size bedding and toiletries. Tent camping will be available if preferred but you must bring your own tent. Participants may also join the fun on **Saturday only** but will need to contact Dana Troeger at dtroeger@fcymca.org to make this arrangement ahead of time.

Recommended items:

Sneakers/Closed-toed shoes, Hat, Sunglasses, Bug Spray and Sunscreen. You may bring your own lawn chairs, but not required. Water stations will be available throughout the day at camp.



Military Outreach Partners:

FCYMCA.org



From the VFW Aux-National Organization

Spread patriotism through song!



Youth are encouraged to enter the VFW Auxiliary's national anthem singing contest, Get Excited for the Red, White and Blue! Contestants may sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" in the arrangement and genre of their choice: rock, pop, reggae, R&B, hip-hop, country, classical and other genres are accepted. But they can't change the words!

The contest consists of two grade divisions: K-8 and 9-12. Entries are due to a local VFW Auxiliary by March 31, 2024.

Visit <https://vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities/> for contest eligibility, rules, an entry form, to see the 2023 winners' videos and more.



WOMEN SURVIVORS: BREAKING STIGMA RESOURCES AND PREVENTION

Women telling their stories
about breaking the stigma and
showing how they survived



MARINE FOR LIFE NETWORK

MARINE FOR LIFE NETWORK

Connecting transitioning Marines and their family members to education resources, employment opportunities, and other Veterans services that aid in their career and life goals outside of military service.

ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A **MARINE!**

Marine for Life Network can guide your search for:



Career & Technical Opportunities



Educational Opportunities



Entrepreneurial Endeavors

NETWORKING IS KEY

Linked in



Our online network utilizes LinkedIn to help Marines network with one another and connect with employers who want to hire Marines.

Face to Face Network



We focus on connecting Marine Veterans to local and national resources, as well as encouraging networking through Marine For Life events and meet ups.

[company/marine-for-life-network](https://www.linkedin.com/company/marine-for-life-network)

marineforlife.org

866-645-8762

[/MarineForLifeNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/MarineForLifeNetwork)

Good afternoon, all! I hope this email finds all of you well. I want to thank you all, again, for your continued support of Gratitude America's Military Support Retreat. We've had an amazing year, serving over 200 veterans and their support persons, thanks in part to all of you promoting our program! I am reaching out today because we are quickly approaching our final retreat of the year, in November, and we currently have eight open slots. If you all could help us with a push to get it filled it would be greatly appreciated! The dates will be November 2-5 in Marineland, FL. Thank you all again for your continued support, and I wish you all the very best!

Christopher Duke

Program Director of Military Support Retreats

GratitudeAmerica

770-298-7654, GratitudeAmerica.org/Retreats



ACTIVE DUTY * VETERANS * NATIONAL GUARD & RESERVE

MILITARY SUPPORT RETREATS

RETREATS FOR COMBAT VETERANS AND THEIR PRIMARY SUPPORT PERSON

	Marineland Florida	★	SEPT 7-10
	Hiawassee Georgia	★	OCT 5-8
	Marineland Florida	★	NOV 2-5

From Thursday at 5:00pm - Sunday at 2:00pm



★ RESTORATION ★ RECREATION ★ RELAXATION ★

Strengthen and restore connections, enjoy the natural beauty of each location, be inspired by fun outdoor activities, learn about available support resources, and relax while exploring the stress coping concepts of Post Traumatic Growth.

- ★ Small, friendly group setting ★
- ★ All accommodations, food, and activities are provided free of charge ★
- ★ Facilitated by Vets, Licensed Clinicians, and Community Nonprofit Support Organizations ★

Please note: Must be 18 to attend and no childcare is provided. Participants are responsible for travel.

TO LEARN MORE AND TO APPLY VISIT: GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG/RETREATS

 CHRISTOPHER DUKE
877-912-7175 ext 102
DUKE@GRATITUDEAMERICA.ORG

Military Veterans

EXPO NOV 2023

10AM - 4PM | WEDNESDAY | NOV 8TH
Resources for all VETS in one location

ADAM W. HERBERT UNIVERSITY CENTER

8-in-1 EXPO



Recruit - Sell - Brand - Educate

20+ Industries - 70+ Companies - Variety of Prospects



Check out more on
our website!
www.MilitaryVeteransExpo.com





CATHOLIC CHARITIES

www.ccbjax.org

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In an effort to assist children and families of Anchor Academy Elementary School and the Mayport Area, We are partnering with Feeding Northeast Florida and Humana Military to provide fresh produce, protein, and pantry staples.

This is a touchless, drive-through food giveaway. Please follow typical school pickup line procedures and remain in your car with windows up. You will pop your trunk for volunteers to place the food inside.

**Every 4th Saturday of the month
Starts at 9:00 a.m.**

555 Wonderwood Dr.
Jacksonville, FL, 32233



dcps.duvalschools.org/anchoracademy



**800-MyVA411
(800) 698-2411**

- LIVE ASSISTANCE**
General information, directory assistance and technical support for VA.gov
- VA HEALTH CARE**
Eligibility, enrollment, locations and COVID-19
- COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE**
MISSION Act eligibility, copayments
- NATIONAL CEMETERIES**
Burial benefits, interment scheduling and headstone/Veteran marker
- VETERANS CRISIS LINE**
Immediate connection to caring, qualified responders
- DEBT MANAGEMENT**
Debt details, payment options and debtor rights
- FACILITY LOCATOR**
Locations of medical centers, benefits offices or cemeteries
- BENEFITS ASSISTANCE**
Information about a variety of VA benefits
- HOMELESS VETERANS LINE**
Information and support for homeless and at-risk callers
- COVID-19 INFORMATION**
Frequently asked questions and live assistance for COVID-related questions

VETERANS CRISIS LINE 988

As of July 16, 2022 the United States transitioned to using the three digit dialing code of 988 press 1 in addition to the existing Veterans Crisis Line of 1-800-273-8255 press 1

FACTS ABOUT 988

ACCESSIBLE - It serves as a universal entry point so that no matter where you live, you can reach a trained crisis counselor who can help people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the U.S.

COMPREHENSIVE - 988 is a direct connection to compassionate care and support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress whether that is thoughts of suicide mental health or substance use crisis or any other kind of emotional distress

FOR EVERYONE - People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one or someone who may need crisis support



988

Call **988**, press 1 for Free, Confidential, 24/7
Mental Health Support



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
North Florida / South Georgia Veterans Health System

71822, 1/99, 3/24

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS VETERAN HOMEOWNERS SAINT JOHNS COUNTY

FREE HOME REHAB

We believe everyone deserves to live in a healthy home. At Operation Lifeline Inc., we feel particularly indebted to those who served in the Armed Forces and have committed to helping as many struggling veterans as possible. Our program provides home rehabilitation services at no charge to eligible veterans to address accessibility and HUD's Eight Healthy Homes Principles.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participant Eligibility:

- Verifiable veteran status
- Gross income below 80% of the area's median income
- Occupy the property as a principal residence and have proof of ownership
- Be in compliance with any existing mortgage on the property
- Be current with utility accounts and property taxes

Property Eligibility:

- Must be a single-family residence
- Must be the applicant's homestead
- Applicant must own the property by fee simple title
- Must be free of any encumbrances other than a first mortgage
- Located within the unincorporated portion of Saint Johns County or the City of Saint Augustine Beach

* Please review full eligibility criteria on our website *

CONTACT US TODAY

*Funding is Limited and Restricted
to Saint Johns County Homes*

Please visit our website to fill
out an application

WWW.OPLIFELINE.ORG



**OPERATION
LIFELINE INC.**

RESERVE COMPONENT TRANSITION ASSISTANCE ADVISORS



Are you a member of a Reserve Component? Have you served 180 or more consecutive days on Title 10? Do you have a service-related injury or health care issue? Perhaps you're about to retire from service and need someone to show you how to get back into the swing of civilian life. Getting to know your Reserve Component Transition Assistance Advisor (RCTAA) means you'll have reliable, professional support when you need it.

I am here to help with the following benefits:

- State and Local Benefits
- VA Assistance for Physical and Mental Health
- Disabled Veterans Program Assistance
- Education and Training Assistance
- Employment Assistance
- Health and Life Insurance
- Financial Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Relocation Assistance
- Effects of a Career Change

Since 2005, RCTAAs have assisted Reserve Component service members with 180 days or more T-10 AD service obtain their federal benefits and entitlements. You could save an average of:

- Employment Counseling (\$75/hour)
- Health Insurance (\$1430/Service Member)
- Legal Assistance (\$255/hour)
- VHA DAV Benefit Received (\$15,034/Service Member)
- VA Benefit Received (\$5786/Service Member)
- Education Benefits Received (\$15,285/Service Member)

Average benefit per eligible Reserve Component service member across all benefits areas=\$11,970.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with federal benefits and entitlements, don't hesitate to contact me. You can either scan this QR code and fill out the attached form or contact me directly using the information below.



Thank you for serving, now let me serve you.

According to the National Defense Authorization Act 2013, [Reserve Component] transition assistance advisors "serve as points of contact to assist eligible members of the reserve components in accessing benefits and health care furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Defense and benefits and health care furnished under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs" (Sec. 513).

David "Dave" Kennett

Reserve Component
Transition Assistance Advisor
Federal Contractor
202-987-3864
DKennett@gapsi.com

DIRECTION | BENEFITS | COMPASSION



RESERVE COMPONENT SERVICE MEMBERS AND VETERANS

Do you need direction to your benefits?

RCTAAs provide **DIRECTION** through the maze of programs available to the Reserve Component and connection to earned **BENEFITS** with the **COMPASSION** of someone who knows what it's like to transition.



*Ask your Reserve Component
Transition Assistance Advisor (RCTAA)
to show you the way!*



BENEFITS:

- » State and Local Benefits
- » VA Assistance for Physical and Mental Health
- » Disabled Veterans Program Assistance
- » Education and Training Assistance
- » Employment Assistance
- » Health and Life Insurance
- » Financial Assistance
- » Legal Assistance
- » Relocation Assistance
- » Effects of a Career Change



*This picture might be worth
\$1000 or more in federal
benefits and entitlements!
Enter your contact
information to receive a call
from a RCTAA.*



*Locate your
closest RCTAA
here!*



By law, Transition Assistance Advisors "serve as points of contact to assist eligible members of the Reserve Components in accessing benefits and health care furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Defense and benefits and health care furnished in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs" (NDAA, 2013, Sec. 513).

From American Legion 5th District FL

IMPORTANT VETERAN INFORMATION

Every spouse of a veteran should have in his/her personal file the following:

Veteran's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Spouse's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Children's Birth Certificate - 3 copies
Certificate of Marriage - 3 copies
Wills (for veteran & spouse) - 2 copies
Spouse's Social Security number
Veteran's Social Security number
Discharge papers - 2 copies
Separation records - 2 copies
V.A. "C" number
G.I. Insurance Policy Number
All Insurance Policies with addresses and numbers. (Originals needed)
Cemetery plot or vault locations and numbers
Death Certificates and divorce decree of all prior marriages (if applicable)

Copies of the following are needed to file a Claim for Death Benefit:

Certificate of Marriage
Birth Certificate of minor children
Death Certificates or divorce decrees of all prior marriages on either side
Service discharge papers
Service separation papers
V.A. "C" number
Social Security number of both parties
V.A. insurance papers
Proof of Death Certificate (minimum 4 copies)
Bills from Funeral Home

ALL originals should be kept in a safety deposit box or equivalent.

NEVER release an ORIGINAL copy.

APPOINT an administrator for minor children.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE: contact your County Veterans' Service Officer

KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION



CALLING ALL KOREAN WAR AND KOREAN DEFENSE VETERANS

We invite you to join the KWVA Brotherhood. There are KWVA Chapters throughout America. Go to our KWVA Facebook Page, our KWVA Website at kwva.us or call the KWVA National Office to join the KWVA at **217-345-4414**



VA SURVIVOR BENEFITS & THE PACT ACT

ESGR4U

You may be eligible for VA benefits and services after your loved one has passed.



The PACT Act makes it easier for many survivors to receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).

VA will be contacting survivors who were previously denied DIC benefits and may be newly eligible under the PACT Act. You do not need to wait for VA to contact you to submit a claim.

How to Apply for DIC and/or Accrued Benefits

Surviving family members may apply for these benefits using the appropriate VA form on va.gov/family-member-benefits.



Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Monthly payment for the eligible surviving spouse, dependent children or parent(s) of the Veteran or service member IF Veteran or service member died in the line of duty or due to a service-related injury or illness.



Accrued Benefits

A one-time payment to a surviving spouse, dependent child(ren) or dependent parent(s) of a deceased Veteran based on relationship when the record shows additional benefits (such as VA compensation or pension) due to the Veteran prior to passing.

Additional Survivor Benefits Available:



Burials and Burial Allowance

Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our National cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone, marker, or medallion, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost. Some survivors may also be eligible for a plot allowance, transportation allowance, and burial allowances based on the service connected disability status of the deceased Veteran.



Final Monthly Payment

If a Veteran who is receiving VA compensation or pension benefits passes away, their last month of benefits can be paid to their surviving spouse.



Home Loan Guaranty

Certificate of Eligibility is available for surviving spouses receiving DIC.



Education and Training

Chapter 35 benefits and Fry Scholarship are the two main GI Bill programs offering educational assistance to survivors and dependents of Veterans who died in the line of duty or as a result of service-related disabilities.



Health Care

Survivors and dependents of Veterans may qualify for health care benefits, such as CHAMPVA.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Learn more and sign up at [VA.gov/PACT](https://va.gov/PACT)
Download the [VA Health and Benefits App](#)
Call us at 1-800-MyVA411 (1-800-698-2411)
Find a VA at [VA.gov/find-locations/](https://va.gov/find-locations/)

Surviving Spouse Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

One Year Mark:

- Moving out of quarters (if applicable)
- Storage at government expense expires
- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension
- HEART Act (one year from date SGLI/DG received)

Two Year Mark:

- Loss of Spouse's VA Transitional DIC Benefits (\$250 per family per month)

only applies to spouse with one or more minor children in household

- Apply for Home of Selection (HOS) extension

Three Year Mark:

- TRICARE Healthcare and Dental benefits transitions to retiree rate for spouse
- Home of Selection (HOS) entitlement expires

Spouse Turns 52:

- If disabled, can remain and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Spouse Turns 55:

- Can remarry and not lose SBP eligibility

Spouse Turns 57:

- Can remarry not lose DIC eligibility

Spouse Turns 60:

- Can remarry and retain SSA Survivor Benefits

Surviving Youth Milestones

Not all milestones apply to every persons situation

Child Turns 16:

- Elimination of SSA entitlement for adult receiving Child in Care benefits

Child Turns 18:

- College - Fry Scholarship *Line of Duty Cases only*
- College - Dependence Education Assistance *VA Service Connected Death*
- Loss of annuities (SSA, DIC, SBP) unless enrolled in school full time. SSA depends on age when graduating High School
- Loss of annual benefit report
- If DG/SGLI beneficiary - if not already received

Child Turns 21:

- Loss of DFFRS/TRICARE unless enrolled in school full time
- Enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 22:

- Loss of Child-Only SBP regardless of school enrollment

Child Turns 23:

- Loss of DFFRS/TRICARE transitional Survivor unless incapacitated
- Enrollment in TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 26:

- Loss of TRICARE Young Adult

Child Turns 33:

- Loss of Fry Scholarship eligibility

FLORIDA SURVIVOR OUTREACH SERVICES AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



Are You eligible to file for benefits based on Presumptive Exposure?

Were you exposed to hazardous materials while serving in the military, such as from Agent Orange or burn pits? Did you serve in Vietnam, Thailand or Southwest Asia? If so, you may be eligible to file for service-connected benefits based on presumptive exposure.

Over the course of the last six months, VA has begun processing service-connected disability claims for six new presumptive conditions related to exposure to hazardous materials.

In May 2021, VA started implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (NDAA), adding bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism to the list of medical conditions presumptively associated with exposure to Agent Orange. A few months later, VA added asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis (to include rhinosinusitis) on a presumptive basis based on particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and certain other areas.

Any Veteran who was previously denied service-connection for any of these six conditions but had symptoms manifest within 10 years of military service would need to file another claim. Be sure to use VA Form 20-0995, "Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim" when filing. The claim form should include the name of the medical condition and also specify that the medical condition is being claimed due to in-service exposure to environmental hazards.

VA is committed to assisting Veterans who may have been exposed to hazardous materials during their military service.

Be sure to stay plugged in to www.va.gov for the most recent developments around environmental hazards; VA is constantly conducting research and surveillance, as well as reviewing scientific literature for conditions that may be related to exposure during military service.

If you feel you have a chronic condition attributed to an in-service exposure, we highly encourage you to file a claim. For more information about VA benefits and eligibility, or how to file a claim, Veterans and survivors can visit VA's website at www.va.gov or call toll-free at 1-800-827-1000.



The **Fire Watch** is Northeast Florida's fight to end veteran suicide. Over 6,000 U.S. military veterans die by suicide each year, including 500 annually here in Florida. But suicide is preventable. And everyone can help. **Join us as a Watch Stander today.** Learn how to identify the risk signs of veterans in crisis and to direct them to the help they need.

3 minutes to enroll. 30 minutes to train. A lifetime of saving lives.

Visit: www.thefirewatch.org/watch-standers to learn more.

Thanks!

Nick Howland

Executive Director, The Fire Watch

www.thefirewatch.org

904.525.1761



Vietnam Veterans of America



If you are a Vietnam Era Veteran and live in one of these counties, please contact the President for information as to how to join

Chapter/President/email/Location

1046	Albert White	
1048	Bob Adkins	adk123robert@outlook.com
1059	Dave Treffinger	dtreffinger433@msn.com
1084	Bill Jefferson	bill_jefferson@comcast.net
1088	Roy (Corky) Rudd	corkstopper50@yahoo.com; Nassau
1092	Forest Hope	foresthope@usa.net; Gainesville
1134	Marvin Lagle	mdlagle@gmail.com; Baker



REMEMBER WHAT OUR MEDAL STANDS FOR:

- RED:** REPRESENTS THE THREE ANCIENT VIETNAMESE EMPIRES OF TONKIN, ANNAM AND COCHIN.
- YELLOW:** THE IMPERIAL COLOR OF VIET NAM.
- GREEN:** SURROUNDED BY EXPANSIVE JUNGLE.
- TED PIECKO, The NAM.

Veterans Council of Clay County:

President: Ansil Lewis

Meeting day is the same, first Wednesday of the month, but the location is changed to Clay County Administration Building, 1st floor conference room, 477 Houston St., Green Cove Springs, FL 32043. Meeting start at 11 a.m.

Mission Statement:

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. is a 501 C3 Not-For-Profit Florida Corporation.



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is comprised of representatives from various veterans' organizations that work with city and county governments and organizations to assist with matters concerning veterans and veterans' activities.

What the Council has done:

- The Veterans Treatment Court
 - Wreaths Across America
 - Homeless Veterans Standdown
 - Veterans Day Parade
 - Vets 4 Vets
- And so much more...

SA-0003147064-01

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

STAND BY THEM

Confidential help for Veterans and their families

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

1-800-273-TALK (8256)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

• • • • Confidential chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net or text to 838255 • • • •

Military/Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255

Confidential chat at MilitaryCrisisLine.net or text 838255

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



Legal Aid for Veterans

The Florida Veterans Legal Helpline is a project of the Major General Ernest A. and Marilyn Bedke Veterans Law Center at Bay Area Legal Services, Inc. The helpline is a free service for eligible Florida veterans and their family members.

When you call, you will speak to a screener who will determine your eligibility and set your appointment with an attorney.

1.866.486.6161

Call Today!
Hours: Monday – Friday
9 AM to 4:30 PM



We Can Help With

- Landlord-Tenant Matters
- Consumer Credit Issues
- Foreclosure
- Divorce + Child Support
- Drivers Licenses/ID cards
- Social Security + Public Benefits
- Discharge Upgrades
- VA Benefits
- And Other Civil Legal Matters
(No Criminal or Traffic Matters)

Supported by the: **FDVA**
FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Become a Watch Stander with The Fire Watch

Veterans Councils of Northeast Florida



BAKER COUNTY

President: Larry Porterfield

Meetings:

Second Thursday of each month

Location:

MacClenny Primitive Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall on North Boulevard

Time : 1800 (6pm)

CLAY COUNTY

President: Harry Silvers

Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 250
3939 County Rd 218
Middleburg, FL 32068

Time: 1400 (2pm)

DUVAL COUNTY

President

Meetings:

Third Tuesday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 37
Main Building
San Juan Avenue

Time: 1900 (7 pm)

NASSAU COUNTY

President: Mike Doran

Meetings:

First Thursday of each month

Location:

American Legion Post 54
626 South 3rd St
Fernandina Beach fit 32034

Time: 1900 (7pm)

St. Johns County

President: Bill Dudley

Meetings:

Last Thursday of each month

Location:

Health & Human Services building
Muscovy room, 1st floor
200 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine

Time: 1900 (7pm)

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County is proud to announce that it has modernized its website and created a Facebook page.



We are inviting all veterans to visit our website at:

NEW <http://www.veteranscouncilsjc.org>

The Veterans Council will post items of interest to all veterans, post pictures, articles, flyers, events, etc. We will post our meetings dates and keep you informed about events at the Jacksonville and St. Augustine National Cemeteries.

Please join our group on Facebook at:

<http://veteranscouncilsjc.org>

Please select **Join the Group** to become a member

Once you have joined the Veterans Council Facebook group you will be able to post your meetings, pictures, articles, fund raisers, etc. It will be your common site to go to and see what's happening.

The website and Facebook page were updated and created so that there would be a central place to list all veterans activities in NE FL.

You may have noticed the Veterans Council's new logo, it was created by Roy Havekost.

He can be contacted at webmaster@veteranscouncilsjc.org

*Veterans Council of St. Johns County,
"Helping All Veterans"*

The Veterans Council of St. Johns County welcomes article submissions from all County Veterans & organizations. Articles should be of interest to all and veterans related. Submissions may be edited &/or shortened and used if space permits.

Send to: rothfeldm@gmail.com



The Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. is a Not For Profit Florida Corporation.

Our formation date was July 4, 2001 in a proclamation issued by the St. Johns County Commissioners. It is composed of representatives of the various veterans' organizations within St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will work with city and county governments and other local organizations to achieve the mutual goal to provide a central agency to assist in the coordination and presentation of matters concerning veterans and veterans activities in St. Johns County.

The Veteran's Council will endeavor to precipitate, stimulate and assist various organizations as they perform patriotic events. One of the major purposes is the promotion and education of national patriotic matters.

The St. Johns County Veterans Council meets the last Thursday of the month at 7 pm.

***The Veterans Council will meet at the County Health & Human Services Building,
200 San Sebastian View
Auditorium, 1st floor***

**Veterans Service Office
200 San Sebastian View, Suite 1400
St. Augustine, FL 32084**

(physical location)

The VSO Office is located in the St. Johns County Health and Human Services Building.

The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, Monday through Friday excluding holidays.

*Service is by appointment.
Phone: 904-209-6160 Fax: 904-209-6161
Joseph McDermott, VSO
Travis Neidig, Assistant VSO
Angela McKenzie, Assistant VSO
Lori Chapman, Assistant VSO
Anna Marie Scott, Office Specialist*

The views expressed in The Patriot Reader Newsletter articles, submissions and spotlights are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County or the editors of The Patriot Reader. It is the purpose of this periodical to share a variety of information that pertain to local veterans and their organizations.